 

 GPS

Group Peer Support (***GPS***) –

for GPs

How meeting as a group and taking time to reflect can contribute to your Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

**Our vision**

***All GPs and GP trainees to have access to reflective practice and peer support in groups, which can support their mental wellbeing and contribute to continuous professional development.***

We believe that by offering GPs and GP trainees an opportunity to meet as a group, to have the space and time to reflect and discuss, this will support cultural change in GPs behaviour that becomes an “everyday” occurrence for “everyone”.

Meeting as a group will support well-being and mental health. GPs who take the time to talk together, learn from one another, share experiences and support one another in this way will naturally build their resilience and grow their armoury for dealing with the day to day stresses of life in the NHS.

The groups can choose any reflective practice modality which allows GPs to meet with their peers for at least 90 minutes in a protected, facilitated space. Each 90 mins as well as enabling some important “downtime” represents 90 minutes of reflection on your practice, recognised as a key part of your CPD.

The Group Peer Support (***GPS***) scheme will be implemented over the next five years.

**The concept**

The NHS Practitioner Health Programme and more recently NHS GP Health Service are aimed at those GPs who become mentally unwell.

However, we believe that it is important that **all** GPs are supported to stay well and have the opportunity to learn and develop the techniques, as a part of CPD, to maintain their own wellbeing and have the time and space to do this. This should form an essential part of their individual continuous professional practice and development. There is evidence that peer support groups, including Balint, reflective practice groups, action learning sets, ‘young’ practitioner groups and other interventions where doctors (and other staff) come together improves morale, reduces burn out and contributes towards lifelong learning; but currently there is little time in the working day of GPs to come together for periods of reflection, peer support or peer learning. ***GPS*** will support GPs to find this time.

We wish to work with GPs to develop around 50 GP peer support groups across England (PHP/GPH only have a remit for England) to understand the value and impact that 90 minutes of facilitated peer support can provide. The group attendees will be asked to complete some basic demographics and contribute to an evaluation process to support the development of the principle on a wide-scale basis.

**The offering**

If you and a group of colleagues would be interested in establishing a local group let us know.

The PHP/GPH will fund up to 900 minutes of facilitator support per group. Each ***GPS*** group will consist of between circa 8-12 attendees. The groups should have a focus on peer support, reflection e.g. Balint and/or resilience.

Groups can be run on a weekly/monthly basis for 90 minutes per event or used as block amounts to create peer support days.

The facilitator will need to be independent of the GPs and we will contribute funding for this according to our tariff. We have an arrangement with the Institute of Group Analysis who can assist in finding a local facilitator for your group.

Unfortunately we cannot fund costs of backfill or premises as part of this scheme.

Contact for further information: Lynne Simpson, ***Group Peer Support*** Lead – lynne.simpson5@nhs.net